



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/776,677	02/06/2001	Kesatoshi Takeuchi	202498US2CONT	2900

22850 7590 07/16/2002

OBLON SPIVAK MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT PC
FOURTH FLOOR
1755 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY
ARLINGTON, VA 22202

EXAMINER

KUMAR, SRILAKSHMI K

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2675

DATE MAILED: 07/16/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Handwritten signature

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/776,677

Applicant(s)

TAKEUCHI, KESATOSHI

Examiner

Srilakshmi K. Kumar

Art Unit

2675

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Higuchi et al. (US 6,160,576).

As to dependent claims 1, 9 and 14, Higuchi et al disclose an image display apparatus, comprising: an image display device configured to display an image (Fig. 1, item 1); a setting section (Fig. 1, item 14) configured to allow a user to set image quality adjustment excluding contrast and brightness adjustments of the image; and an image processing section (Fig. 1, items 30, 40 & 50) configured to perform the image quality adjustment of the image according to the setting made by the user, and to perform contrast compensation to maintain a brightness at a center of a specific color region larger than a predetermined size within the image displayed by the image display device, regardless of the setting of the image quality adjustment (col. 5, lines 8-54, col. 5, line 63-col. 6, line 6). Higuchi et al do not disclose where the specific color region larger than a predetermined size. Higuchi et al do disclose where the radius of the area is varied as the first image enhancer 34 is used to sharpen the blur caused by defocus or age related decline in focus (col. 11, line 49-col. 13, line 27). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the specific color region larger than a predetermined size is shown by the system of Higuchi et al as stated above with the sharpening of the blur or defocus of the picture.

Art Unit: 2675

This feature is advantageous as it enhances aged images to show a more refined and sharpened image.

As to dependent claims 6, 12 and 19, Higuchi et al disclose an image processing device, comprising: an image filter configured to perform filter processing of an image by using a selected one of a plurality of filters with different frequency characteristics (col. 6, lines 25-60); and a contrast compensation section configured to perform contrast compensation using a contrast compensation value, related to the selected filter, to maintain a brightness at a center of a specific color region larger than a predetermined size within an image that has undergone the filter processing, regardless of which filter is selected from the plurality of filters (col. 5, lines 8-54, col. 6, lines 25-60). Higuchi et al do not disclose where the specific color region larger than a predetermined size. Higuchi et al do disclose where the radius of the area is varied as the first image enhancer 34 is used to sharpen the blur caused by defocus or age related decline in focus (col. 11, line 49-col. 13, line 27). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the specific color region larger than a predetermined size is shown by the system of Higuchi et al as stated above with the sharpening of the blur or defocus of the picture. This feature is advantageous as it enhances aged images to show a more refined and sharpened image.

As to dependent claims 2 and 15, limitations of claims 1 and 14, and further comprising, wherein the image quality adjustment is a sharpness adjustment (col. 11, line 49-col. 13, line 27).

As to dependent claims 3, 7, and 16, limitations of claims 1, 6, and 14, and further comprising, wherein the specific color is white. Although Higuchi et al do not disclose where the specific color is white, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the specific color could have been white as the image could have been one where there is no color

Art Unit: 2675

and further a combination of R/G/B yields white and is advantageous as the image would have been brighter.

As to dependent claims 4, 10 and 17, limitations of claims 1, 9 and 14, and further comprising, wherein the image processing section includes:

an image filter configured to perform the image quality adjustment by selecting one of a plurality of filters with different frequency characteristics according to the setting of the image quality adjustment, and to perform filter processing on the image using the selected filter (col. 6, lines 25-60); and

a contrast compensation section configured to perform the contrast compensation upon the image that has undergone the filter processing, using a contrast compensation value related to the selected filter (Fig. 1, item 33, col. 6, lines 25-60).

As to dependent claims 5, 8, 11, 13, and 18, limitations of claims 4, 6, 9, 12, and 17, and further comprising, contrast adjustment section configured to perform contrast adjustment of the image independently of the contrast compensation section (Fig. 1 items 34 and 35, col. 11, line 49-col. 13, line 27).

As to dependent claim 20, see claims 3, 7 and 16, above.

As to dependent claim 21, see claims 5, 8, 11, 13, and 18, above.

Conclusion

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

Or faxed to:

Art Unit: 2675

(703) 308-9051, (for formal communications intended for entry)

Or:

(703) 308-6606 (for informal or draft communications, please label

"PROPOSED" or DRAFT")

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal drive,

Arlington, VA, Sixth Floor (Receptionist)

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Srilakshmi K. Kumar whose telephone number is 703 306 5575.


The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven J. Saras can be reached on 703 305 9720. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703 872 9314 for regular communications and 703 308 9051 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703 305 4700.

Srilakshmi K. Kumar
Examiner
Art Unit 2675

SKK
July 15, 2002


STEVEN SARAS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600